

The President's Daily Brief

20 August 1969

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SOVIET AFFAIRS

Riot police are patrolling in central Prague today to prevent demonstrations similar to the minor ones which were quickly snuffed out yesterday afternoon and evening in Wenceslaus Square. The police were overzealous in trying to avert a major disturbance, using tear gas to break up a passive and apparently unorganized crowd estimated at several thousand. Such overreaction by police could lead to more serious conflicts before the anniversary period is over tomorrow.

There is no evidence 50X1
of additional Soviet troops either moving into Czechoslovakia or even close to the Czech borders from the USSR, Poland, Hungary or southern East Germany. Some of the Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia may have moved closer to the cities, however, to handle any disturbances that the Czech army or security troops cannot control.

There are rumors that pro-Soviet hardliners plan to generate disturbances designed to bring about military intervention and ouster of Husak. We consider it unlikely that conservatives would initiate or provide the impetus for spontaneous acts of violence but they might try to take advantage of unrest to strengthen their positions.

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The Chinese chose the eve of the anniversary of the Soviet invasion to issue another lengthy attack on the USSR as the aggressor in the prolonged border dispute. The

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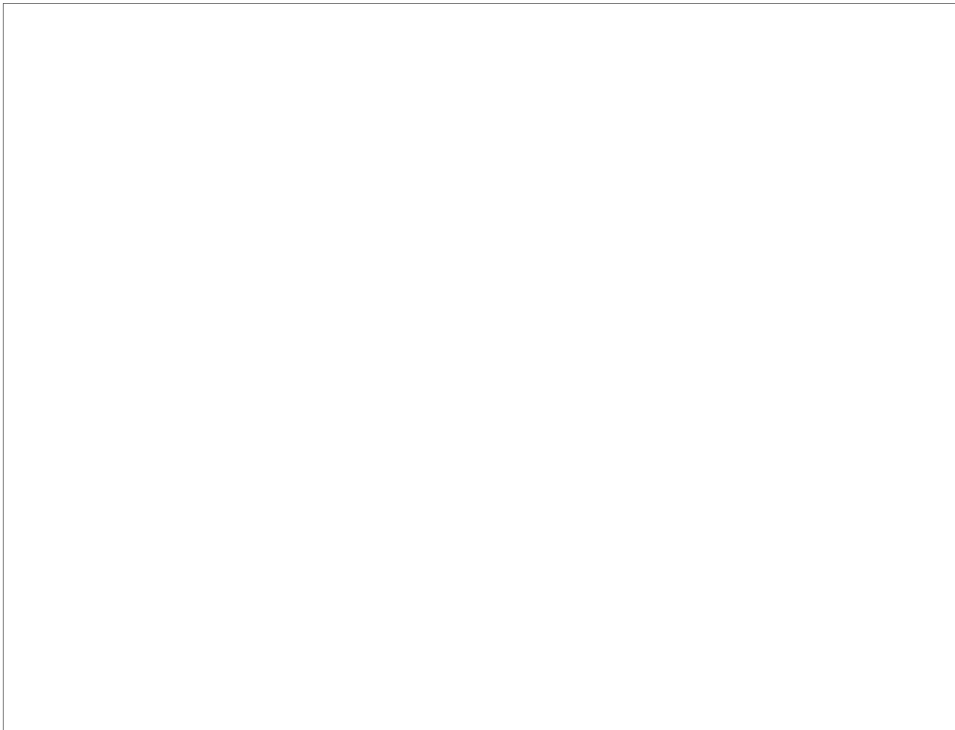
note charges the Soviets with more than 400 provocations during June and July, and denounces Moscow for talking about normalizing the situation while actually adopting measures which intensify tensions. Moscow meanwhile pointedly commemorated the thirtieth anniversary of a victory over the Japanese on the Manchurian border.

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A Soviet space official says the USSR will try to land an unmanned probe on Mars before the US. The Soviet Mars shot that failed last March may in fact have been such an attempt. The next opportunity for Moscow will come in the spring of 1971, two years before the US Viking.

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VIETNAM



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SOUTH KOREA

Opposition to President Pak's proposed amendment to allow himself a third term will intensify as the government party jams through legislation establishing procedures for a national referendum. Passage is expected on 31 August. The amendment itself is to be voted on by the National Assembly on 13 September, after which comes the referendum, the last major step in the amendment process. The government, expecting a new wave of student demonstrations against the amendment, is reinforcing police units in the capital.

COMMUNIST CHINA

Serious fighting is continuing in a dozen provinces, including several previously stabilized areas in east and south China. Peking's current difficulties may be a result of trying to use a "carrot and stick" approach. The central government issued a harsh directive last month ordering factionalists to cease fighting and to surrender their arms within a month. On the other hand, People's Daily took pains to point out that rival factions must be "treated equally" and that their leaders must be "protected." Much of the provincial disunity stems from the dissatisfaction of factional leaders with the present provincial power structure but there will be no solution as long as Peking's attitude remains equivocal.

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